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Occupational Employment and Wages in Roanoke – May 2015

Workers in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.50 in May 2015, 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; legal; protective service; and construction and extraction.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Roanoke employment shares were significantly higher in 5 of the 22 occupational groups including health care practitioners and technical and office and administrative support. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation including management; education, training, and library; and computer and mathematical. (See [Table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Roanoke metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Roanoke		United States	Roanoke		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations.....	100%	100%		\$23.23	\$20.50	*	-12
Management.....	5.0	3.4	*	55.30	50.74	*	-8
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	4.6	*	35.48	30.28	*	-15
Computer and mathematical.....	2.9	2.0	*	41.43	34.02	*	-18
Architecture and engineering.....	1.8	1.3	*	39.89	34.40	*	-14
Life, physical, and social science.....	0.8	0.5	*	34.24	30.77	*	-10
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.9	*	22.19	20.77	*	-6
Legal.....	0.8	0.6	*	49.74	37.66	*	-24
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	5.1	*	25.48	24.49	*	-4
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	1.0	*	27.39	20.03	*	-27
Healthcare practitioners and technical.....	5.8	7.9	*	37.40	37.27		0
Healthcare support.....	2.9	3.3	*	14.19	13.18	*	-7
Protective service.....	2.4	2.9	*	21.45	16.52	*	-23
Food preparation and serving related.....	9.1	8.4	*	10.98	10.04	*	-9
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	2.8	*	13.02	11.88	*	-9
Personal care and service.....	3.1	2.8		12.33	11.69	*	-5
Sales and related.....	10.5	11.0		18.90	17.22	*	-9
Office and administrative support.....	15.8	17.0	*	17.47	16.22	*	-7
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	12.67	14.37	*	13

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Roanoke metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Roanoke		United States	Roanoke		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	4.2		22.88	17.68	*	-23
Installation, maintenance, and repair.....	3.9	4.4	*	22.11	19.64	*	-11
Production.....	6.6	7.3		17.41	16.13	*	-7
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	7.5		16.90	15.97		-6

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Roanoke is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

One occupational group—healthcare practitioners and technical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Roanoke had 12,010 jobs in the healthcare practitioners and technical group, accounting for 7.9 percent of local area employment, significantly larger than the 5.8-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$37.27, not significantly different from the national average of \$37.40.

With employment of 4,090, registered nurses was the largest occupation within the healthcare practitioners and technical group, followed by licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (1,280). Among the higher-paying jobs were all other physicians and surgeons with a mean hourly wage of \$106.79 and family and general practitioners with a wage of \$79.81. At the lower end of the wage scale were pharmacy technicians (\$14.06) and medical records and health information technicians (\$18.03). (Detailed occupational data for healthcare and practitioners are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40220.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area as it does nationally. In the Roanoke area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group. For instance, medical records and health information technicians were employed at 1.9 times the national rate in Roanoke, and surgeons at 3.3 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, pharmacy technicians had a location quotient of 1.0 in Roanoke, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Virginia Employment Commission.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Roanoke, Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,853 establishments with a response rate of 73 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2015 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Roanoke, Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke Counties and Roanoke and Salem Cities in Virginia.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at <http://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic>. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations.....	12,010	1.4	\$37.27	\$77,520
Dentists, general.....	90	0.8	79.81	166,000
Dietitians and nutritionists.....	90	1.3	25.87	53,820
Optometrists.....	70	1.7	59.42	123,590
Pharmacists.....	450	1.4	61.60	128,140
Family and general practitioners.....	240	1.7	79.81	166,010
Internists, general.....	130	2.5	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾
Obstetricians and gynecologists.....	60	2.9	94.27	196,080
Pediatricians, general.....	70	2.2	71.12	147,940
Psychiatrists.....	100	3.9	77.58	161,370
Surgeons.....	150	3.3	101.94	212,040
Physicians and surgeons, all other.....	680	1.9	106.79	222,120
Physician assistants.....	210	1.9	43.29	90,050
Occupational therapists.....	130	1.1	38.43	79,940
Physical therapists.....	270	1.2	40.51	84,260
Respiratory therapists.....	190	1.4	25.99	54,060
Speech-language pathologists.....	160	1.1	37.59	78,200
Veterinarians.....	100	1.3	54.09	112,510
Registered nurses.....	4,090	1.4	29.27	60,880
Nurse practitioners.....	170	1.2	43.36	90,180
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists.....	160	0.9	22.11	45,990
Dental hygienists.....	140	0.6	33.36	69,390
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians.....	40	0.8	27.36	56,910
Diagnostic medical sonographers.....	80	1.3	33.65	70,000
Radiologic technologists.....	300	1.4	24.29	50,520
Magnetic resonance image technologists.....	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	30.55	63,540
Dietetic technicians.....	30.0	1.0	12.09	25,150
Pharmacy technicians.....	440	1.0	14.06	29,250
Psychiatric technicians.....	40	0.7	11.39	23,680
Surgical technologists.....	170.0	1.5	18.78	39,050
Veterinary technologists and technicians.....	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	15.93	33,130
Ophthalmic medical technicians.....	80	1.9	13.29	27,650
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses.....	1,280	1.7	19.23	40,010
Medical records and health information technicians.....	400	1.9	18.03	37,500
Opticians, dispensing.....	120.0	1.5	19.45	40,460
Occupational health and safety specialists.....	100	1.3	27.86	57,950

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimates not available.